

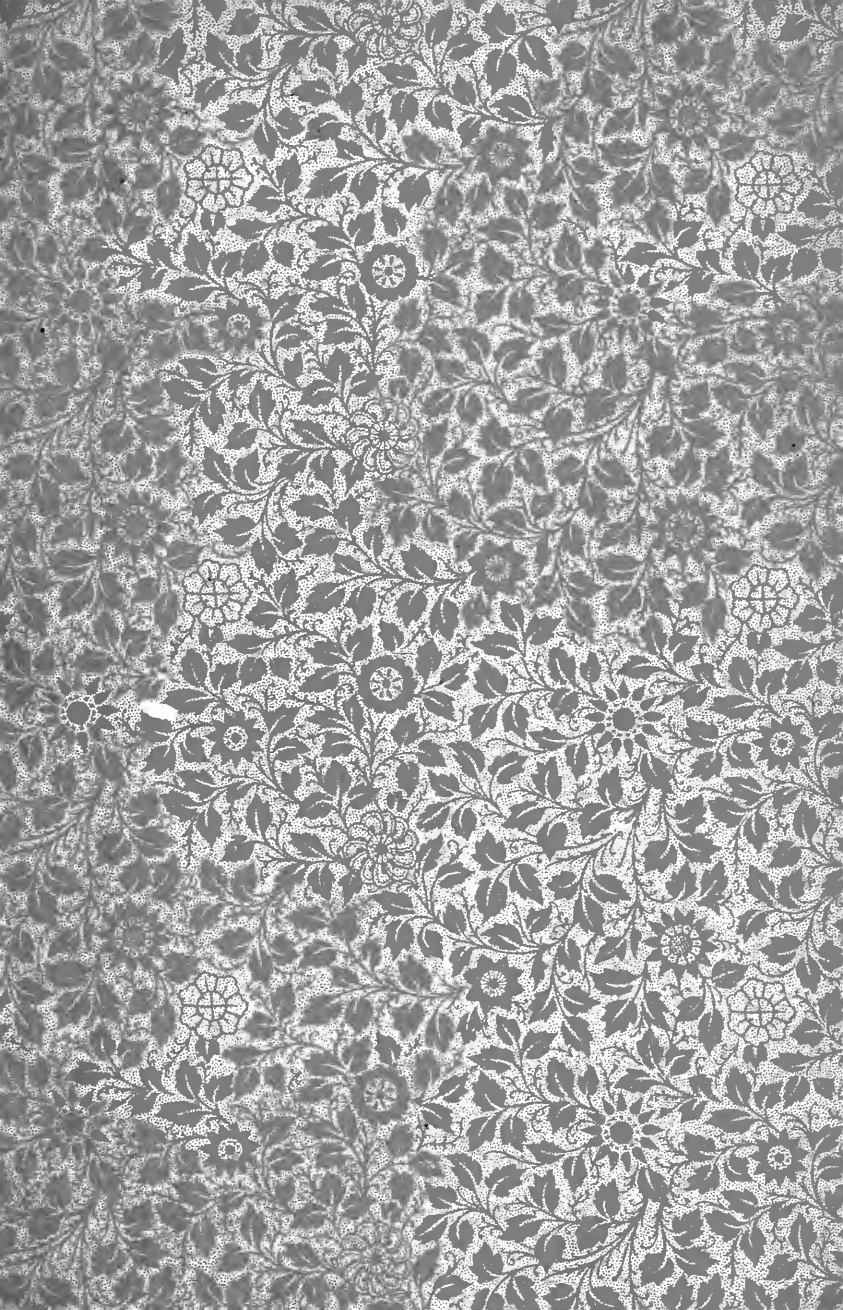


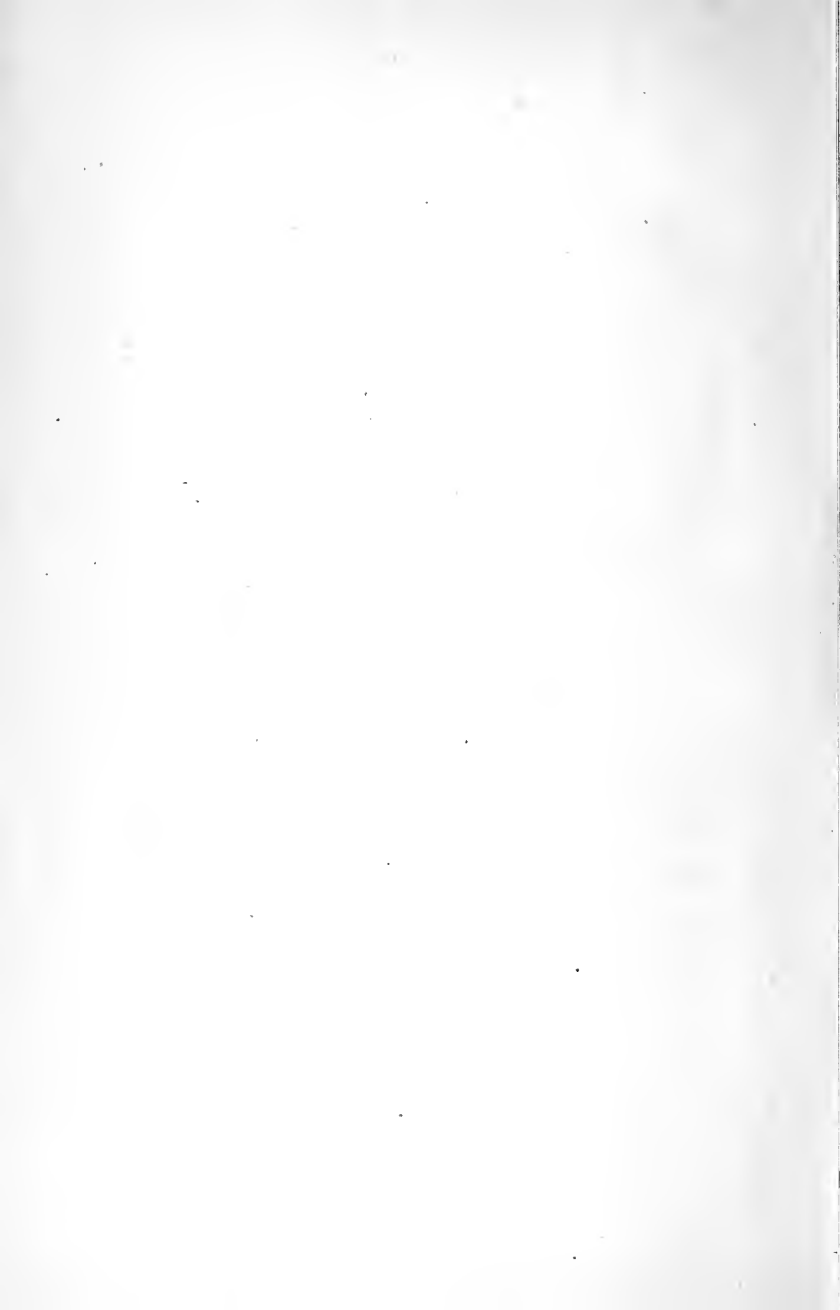
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.









THE POEMS

OF

Tommy S. Turner.

"THE LIGHT BARK OF MY GENIUS LIFTS THE SAIL."—*Dante.*



LOUISVILLE, KY.

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1883

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1882

TO

MY FRIENDS

THESE POEMS ARE

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CONTENTS.



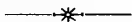
	PAGE.
To My Harp,	9
Death,	11
The Rose,	12
"The Lord will Find His Own,"	14
A Wreck of Poverty,	15
A Thought of Happiness,	17
Remember Thy Creator,	19
Dreaming,	21
The Friends of Youth,	22
Stray Thoughts,	24
Youthful Memories,	25
My Childhood's Home,	27
Night,	29
Katie's Grave,	30
The Moonlight,	31
Hope,	32
The Farmer,	33
The Poet's Sigh,	34
Discovery of America,	36
The Neglected Chord,	37

	PAGE.
Lines,	38
Lines Written in my Sister's Scrap-book,	41
Life's Brevity,	44
Benefactors,	46
Lines,	46
Lines,	47
Lines,	48
"Fickle Woman,"	49
The Rose-bud,	52
Weary,	55
Words Fitly Spoken,	57
The Rebuke,	58
Song,	59
"The Wintry Days are Coming,"	60
In the Twilight,	61
The Days of Dreaming,	66
Nightfall,	67
Selfishness,	69
The Old Norse King,	72
To Euclid M. Cox,	74
To Morgan T. Craft,	80
To Tom,	86
Retrospection,	88

LOVE POEMS.

	PAGE.
Love,	95
"I Met Young Love when Life was Young,"	97
"When Life Blushed 'Neath the Sky of May,"	99
The Stolen Bow,	101
Song,	103
Written for a Young Friend,	104
"The Day When I Forget Thee,"	106
When I'll Cease to Love You,	107
"If Thou Wilt be My Dearie,"	108
Suspense,	109
To Some Flowers,	110
On a Similar Subject,	111
To Fanny,	112
The Maiden to the Mocking-bird,	113
Edward Grey,	115
Invocation,	117
Song,	119
Sweet Annie Lerow,	120
To Bessie,	123
To Bessie,	124
The End,	: 127

POEMS.



TO MY HARP.

Thou rustic harp! thy simple notes
Do oft beguile my lonely ear,
When midnight's veil around me floats.
As if they came from fairy throats
They thrill my very soul to hear.

Though wild they be, and rude the hand,
And all unskilled and weary too,
That strikes—oh, harp! at thy command,
Thy music sweet has thrown so bland
Enchantment over all I knew.

Although unheeded and unknown
In our secluded home we be,
When dewy midnight shades the zone,
Though no one hears thy mellow tone,
I sit in converse long with thee.

Yes, when with thought and labor worn,
At night I trim my lamp again,
To thee, my gentle friend, I turn,
And we together sit and mourn
That we must walk the ways of pain.

How like a sister and a brother
We two have been, so free of heart,
Quick to confide to one another
Our loves, joys, hopes, despairs; all other
Passions this life has willed our part.

'T is thou hast been my dearest friend,
And smiled in bliss, and wept in woe,
And I would fain thy faith commend,
And o'er thy strings, my heart's best friend,
An amaranthine wreath to throw.

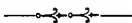
But I can not, alas! I fear,
Since learning is to me denied!
For I my prime of life must wear
In farm pursuits, and choke the tear
That trickles down in spite of pride!

So I can only cull for thee
Of the wild growing prairie-flowers,

Or catch the sound so silvery
Of rivulets that dance in glee,
Or wild songed birds in sylvan bowers.

We two can sing the rustic's song
Of love, and he will gladly hear
And list with confidence as 'mong
His griefs and joys we linger long,
And oft reward us with a tear.

Then in our native element we'll try,
Unheeded and unknown, our flight
Through woods and fields to nature's sky,
And sing whatever charms the eye
'Till shrouded in oblivious Night.



DEATH.

That towering pride, yet never known to stoop,
At Death's cold touch will, sick'ning, pale and droop
As flowers that strew the plain when they receive
The rude, cold chill that Winter's sure to give.

THE ROSE.

I pulled a lovely, fragrant rose
From off its parent stem one day,
To deck with it my flower-vase,
Because it looked so bright and gay.

And many friends admiring came
And looked upon this beauteous flower;
All who beheld it did exclaim
That 't was the fairest in Love's bower.

They touched the rose with fingers soft,
And over it in fondness hung;
Well pleased was I to hear so oft
Their praises, although lightly sung.

But when the rose began to fade,
And curl its leaves up in decay
Till it was all dried and decayed,
Its every charm had passed away,

No one e'er paused o'er it to grieve,
But passed by it without a sigh:

As men who fall from high estates
Are spurned and passed unheeded by.

Then when I saw no one e'er turn
To note the rose's soon decay,
I lightly snatched it from the urn,
And, thoughtless, threw the thing away!

E'en like the rose is beauty fair,
When youth and love sing roundelays;
All, all who come its fragrance share,
And utter words of flattering praise.

But when the bloom fades from her cheek,
And all her charms lie withered too,
They who flattered turn to seek
A lovelier maid with charms all new.

“THE LORD WILL FIND HIS OWN.”

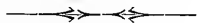
A poet, musing once on death,
Said, “Bury me not in the sea,
For there to lie in death beneath,
Oh, the loneliest grave must be;
Where only the salt waves shall keep
Lonely vigil over my sleep;

“The sea is trackless, and will lend
No sign, nor monument upbear
To tell the tale; and as no friend
Could muse above my ashes there,
The saddest of all deaths must be
That deep one in the trackless sea.”

Another said, “Bury me not
Out on the sandy desert waste,
Where fierce simoons, so deathly hot,
Sweep the desert in sick’ning haste;
The sands will drift and blow away,
And leave my bones to bleach for aye.”

* * * * *

It matters not where thou art laid,
Oh, poet! if thy heart be true—
Whether thy bed in the desert's made
Or neath the waters dark and blue;
Though thy ashes from zone to zone
Be scattered, "the Lord will find his own."



A WRECK OF POVERTY.

I walked upon the stage of life
With burning spirits high,
And thought to reach the burnished heights
Of fair fame's sunny sky.
But all the hopes and prospects fair,
I saw around me shine,
Alike the glow of summer tide,
Were fated to decline—
For I'm a wreck of poverty,
Cast upward by the flood,
And while the rich man lives in ease.
I labor for my food.

Far down the streets of life I move,
Amid the jostling mass,
But still no kindly look greets mine
As through the crowds I pass.
The worldly pulse throbs but for gold,
Or idle pleasure's strain;
Yet sordid gold corrodes and rusts,
And lasting pleasures pain!
Yes, I'm a wreck of poverty,
Cast upward by the flood,
And though the rich man lives in ease,
I labor for my food.

But what care I, for I am young,
And stout and healthy too,
And if I've food and clothes to-day—
Oh, surely that will do!
Yes! I will sing and merry be
While life remains with me,
For I'm a rambling, merry lad,
A wreck of poverty!
Yes, I'm a wreck of poverty,
Cast upward by the flood,
And though the rich man lives in ease,
I labor for my food.

Oh, when the rich man sick'ning dies—
For death 's a certain thing—
The lawyer sits and counts his fees,
And "all that sort of thing."
Then keep your wealth and golden store;
So I've enough to-day
It matters not; another day
And I may pass away—
For I'm a wreck of poverty,
Cast upward by the flood,
And while the rich man lives in ease,
I labor for my food.

*A THOUGHT OF HAPPINESS.*

There is a saying, and 't is truly wise,
That as man pursues happiness it flies.
Happiness is a nymph as fair to view
As the sunbeams that court the morning dew,
And man pursues her e'er with wistful eye,
Yet e'er before him sees the maiden fly,

And as he grows more eager in the chase,
She lifts her wing triumphant in the race,
And, sailing with the swiftness of the wind,
She leaves her vain pursuer far behind.

Or if she's caught, how vain was all his pain!
The next moment will see her gone again,
Or like the butterfly chased by cruel boys;
The fly is grasped—the grasp its life destroys.
Man spends his days discussing lofty themes,
But seldom lives to realize his dreams.

His restless soul forever spurs him on
In search of that which every one should own,
Till life is past, and then in deep distress
He dies, a stranger still to happiness.

Deluded man! "misspending all his years,"
To die at last in sorrow, grief, and tears,
When happiness would linger by his side
If he would wed contentment for his bride.
As long as you may search for happiness,
So long you'll live in deep and sad distress.
Let happiness alone; be to your duty true,
And happiness at length will come to you;
Her sunny face all wreathed in smiles so sweet,
She gayly comes your yearning souls to greet.

REMEMBER THY CREATOR.

Remember thy Creator

While thou art young and fair,
Ere the evil days draw nigh,
And thou art free from care;

In the early days of spring-time
When every hour is sweet,
And life is oh! so joyous
That joy seems all complete.

Remember thy Creator

When starting out in life,
And he will bless and be with thee,
And cheer thee through its strife.

He'll 'tend thy bark on lonely seas
Where the wild billows foam,
When thou art tossed here and there,
Where'er thy bark may roam.

Remember thy Creator,

Oh! wayward, sinful man.

What joy is there in roaming?
Oh! view death's ghastly scan.

The grave is dark and lonely;
There's nothing there but gloom;
What hope have you, oh, wanderer,
What hope *beyond* the tomb?

Lord, Thou my guide and portion be,
And bless me in my youth!
Lead me in virtue, wisdom's path,
Instruct me in Thy truth.

And when age comes with silver hairs,
And eyes bedimmed with tears,
Oh, Thou my comfort be,
And vanquish all my fears.

And when I'm done with toils below,
I part with those I love,
Oh, safely Thou my spirit bear
To Thy sweet home above.

DREAMING.

All day long have I been dreaming,
Building castles in the air,
Till my soul is lost in gleamings
Of the future bright and fair.

Oh! what noble heights are towering
In the land by fancy drawn,
And the golden sunbeams showering
Fall upon those heights at dawn.

But those heights, though sweetly shining,
Shall all hasten to decay;
And my soul, in sorrow pining,
Will lament their vanished ray.

Still the brightest lights are given
But to shine awhile and fade;
Naught endures this side of heaven,
All things enter death's dark shade.

THE FRIENDS OF YOUTH.

"I came to the spot of my birth and cried, 'The friends of my youth, where are they?'"—*Anon.*

"Some are dead, and some are gone,
And some are wanderers."—*Byron.*

Once more with memory's magic wand
I view my childhood's hours,
And there with beating heart I stand
Amid those cherished bowers.
How many memories linger there
Of youth's delightful morning!
How bright and rosy was the glare
Our happy skies adorning!

Oh! yonder stands loved Pleasant Grove,
Where oft in youth I sported;
Where first I felt the thrill of love;
There happy lovers courted.
There first I studied 'Rithmetic,
And puzzled over Grammar;
And played full many a school-boy trick
That lost me play-time's clamor.

How happy then we children were,
And loud and merry gamboled;
At play-time chased our "bounding deer,"
Or run, or fought and scrambled,
Or dreamed the infant dream of life,
And saw the world expanding
To pleasant scenes, nor thought of strife—
All moved at our commanding.

* * * * *

Alas! those friends, where are they now,
And how in life succeeded?
Oh! let me drop the veil, for how
Those lovely dreamings speeded!
And life came on with all its cares,
And brought the train of Sorrow;
How thick was it beset with snares
In all temptation's horror!

Then friend, oh plead for those that fell!
And say the fault was human;
For who the tempter's might can tell
But those who have gone through, man?
A few advanced, but *many* fell,
And o'er the earth are driven;
Let's meekly bow; He ruleth well
Who rules the earth and heaven.

STRAY THOUGHTS.

Oh, to be wandering, wandering again
Down through the orchard and over the plain,
Where oft my feet in happiness trod,
As I went and romped o'er the matted sod,
When life was young and hope beat high,
And silver clouds spanned my hopeful sky.

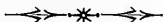
Ah! not a sorrow clouded my brow,
For I was young and my heart aglow
With the brilliant dreams of what I'd do;
The world would love me, my friends be true;
My fame would spread from zone to zone;
Few men could count the riches my own.

These, oh! my friend, these forsooth,
Were the brilliant ideas of my youth,
But how like the ignis-fatuus light
Doth lead the traveler astray in the darksome night;
They bloomed awhile, promises fair,
Only to burst as bubbles of air.

Now I'am alone in a stranger's land,
Few friends move at my command;

Oh, for the days, the bright sunny days!
Oh, for the woodland and my youth's highways!
Oh! to be roaming, roaming again
Down through the orchard and over the plain.

PLANO, TEXAS, August, 1878.



YOUTHFUL MEMORIES.

Oh, let me think, when evening shades
Hang mantling o'er the plain,
And walking o'er the western wave
The night asserts its reign,

Of those who twine around my heart
Like cypress to its home,
And life and freshness there impart,
Cheering me as I roam.

'Tis sweet indeed to think of those
My boyhood cherished so;
We knew no cares, we had no woes,
And pleasure's radiant glow

Beamed in our hearts and made them beat
In wildest ecstasy;
We dreamed fair dreams till life complete
Was painted on our sky.

How oft we roved among the hills
With spirits wild with glee,
And wandered down meandering rills
Or o'er the verdant lea;

Or roamed among the forest trees
In autumn's beauteous day,
And sought the cool, refreshing breeze
Among the leaves at play.

Ah, me! those days of youth so fair
Were like a dream complete;
A time more sweet, a day so dear,
I ne'er again expect to meet.

Go roam o'er earth, through pleasure's halls,
But nought so sweet I ween
Across your path so brightly falls
As that which *once hath been*.

HILLSBORO, TEXAS, 1879.

MY CHILDHOOD'S HOME.

Far away 'mong the hills, 'mong the flowers and vines,
The home of my youth reposes most fair ;
There the mock-bird sings gayly, and the clear sun
shines

So soft and brilliantly, and flowers rare,
And roses, sweet roses, so sweetly there bloom
That the air is rich with their fragrant perfume.

The woodland stands by with its outstretching arms,
Which the vines and briars climb with delight ;
And dear to my heart are its shades and its charms !

The hunters and hounds chase the fox there at night,
And the hunters' shout, the deep bay of the hound,
Are borne to the ear through the stillness profound.

There 's the apple-orchard, too, where the red ripe fruit
Hangs down so low when the harvest is near,
And full many a day—what a pleasant pursuit!—

I've gathered and stored the apples with care.
The apples we ate 'round the Christmas-fire blaze,
Served to remind of the bright summer days.

Dear home of my childhood, 'tis *long* since I saw thee,
Long since I roved 'mongst thy bowers at will,
But how, when life's griefs and cares overawe me,
Fondly my spirit doth turn to thee still.
Memory chases the pain from the brow of care
With beautiful dreams of the days that were.

In life's eve we think of our childhood's home;
The dear ones who guarded our footsteps then;
But when those dear ones are dead, and lonely we roam
O'er the world, taste its griefs and cares, we begin
To think, Is there not a place where the weary may go
To rest from toil when our days cease below?

'Tis then that sweet hope, the bright maiden of heaven,
Descends to earth, breathing words of good cheer,
Telling the care-tossed soul of a mansion given
For those who live upright and honest here.
Then why complain 'neath the burdens we bear
If they all cease in that mansion fair?

BELL SPRINGS, 1880.

NIGHT.

Night came down o'er all the earth
When the fair world was young,
Before a mortal frame had birth,
And o'er the hills and valleys hung

Her robe of darkness far and near;
The waters of the mighty deep
Ceased murmuring from dreadful fear,
And hushed themselves to sleep.

The lion slumbered in his den
As peaceful as a new-born child,
Or wandered through some lonely glen,
And fed on herbage wild.

The shudd'ring forest hung in gloom,
For foul and heavy was the air;
The weary dove did moan and moan,
For all was sullen rash despair.

Thus darkness hung for many a year;
And many a day and hour

Our infant earth did sleep in fear
Neath Night's all-ruling power.

At length Light said, "'Tis time for thee
To feel my might and fly away!"
Night felt and fled, while bird and bee,
All nature joyous cried, "'Tis day!"

Then startled seas and rivers bold,
All earth stood up in proud array,
And whispering to each other told
The joyful news, "'Tis day! 'tis day!"

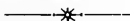
PLANO, TEXAS, NOV, 15, 1878.



KATIE'S GRAVE.

The grass is green where Katie lies sleeping;
There the flowers are springing to-day;
Tall trees stand round in which squirrels are leaping,
And birds sing from them cheerful and gay;
Nature is wearing her loveliest dress,
And all things seem to banish distress.

Such is the place where Katie lies sleeping,
And 't is meet for a spirit like hers!
There are no signs to indicate weeping;
Only a soothing thought that avers
How calm and tranquil here is her rest;
I think thus to calmly sleep is blest.

*THE MOONLIGHT.*

The soft moonlight is on the hills,
And 'mong the clouds 't is creeping,
'T is floating down the sparkling rills,
And on the flowers sleeping.

The zephyrs dance upon its beams
As through the air they 're streaming;
So light they float along it seems
As if the world was dreaming.

HOPE.

Sweet comforter! thou bringest to mind
The happy hours I've left behind

On life's worn track,
When youthful hearts were beating high,
And pleasure's dream was in the eye;
When Beauty's charm lay round the heart—
But all those things I've seen depart
To ruin's wreck.

But when those dreams all drooping died,
Thou, Hope, stood lingering by my side,
All loth to leave.

Oh, Hope! 't was thy bright cheering rays
That bore me up in darkest days;
Were't not for thee, oh, long ago
My heart had deluged been in woe,
And left to grieve.

THE FARMER.

To-day I passed a rugged cot
That stood 'long by the road,
And then, I thought, the lot
Is hard for human-hood.

The toil begins in early youth,
And grows with coming years,
And their true life, in sooth,
Is always clouds and fears.

But ah! have they in view
A brighter land than this,
Where skies are ever blue
And fear gives way to bliss?

Oh! toiling, weary man,
Pray keep in view the skies,
Where sorrows never come
And pleasure never dies!

RICHARDSON, TEXAS, 1877.

THE POET'S SIGH.

At close of autumn day adown the west
The sun slow sank away to rest,
While rowing o'er the lake was seen
A youth with dreamy mien,
Who gazed on the departing sun
And mused, methought, on things long gone.

I paused a moment on my way
To hear if aught the youth might say
Of fields arrayed in cheerful green,
Where naught but love and joy are seen;
And, as the sun slow passed away,
These are the words I heard him say:

“My native home! Sweet boyhood's home!
Once more near thee I'd love to roam!
To tread thy clover-fields so rare,
Where sweetest perfumes do fill the air,
Where song-birds sweetly chant on high,
And flowers bloom of varied dye!

“To dance beneath thy maple-trees,
Rocked to and fro by the evening breeze,

Where Luna smiles in her sweetest light,
And the host of heaven, almost, at night
Can be seen in their glory on high
With their wings and garments of snowy dye!

“Or over a lake like this to glide,
With Love close seated by my side,
And sing the song my heart inspires,
Or tell the tale that passion fires!
Those precious bowers! How blest I'd be
If I were only *there* again! Ah, me!”

The poet's dreams! how bright they are!
Are seldom crossed with thoughts of care.
He dwells in Fancy's fairy land,
Obeying ever her command;
'Tis sad to know his fairest gleams
Exist but in the poet's dreams.

“THE CASTLE,” Dec. 6, 1878.

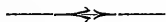
DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

When Columbus unfurled his ship to the breeze,
Fair Freedom looked forth from her isle in the west,
She saw the lone ship on the dark stormy seas;
The sad load that lay on the mariner's breast.
Then she let her eyes glance to the land he was leaving,
Where nations lay groaning 'neath tyranny's chain;
And, weeping, she turned her eyes from it grieving,
And sighed for the valor that faded in vain.

The flood of dark ages degraded the world,
And vile superstition the nations long bound;
Fair Science and Art to the dust had been hurled,
For barbarous tribes ruled the nations around;
Peace and Love took their flight from earth, weeping,
And the angel of darkness was hovering round.
Fell rite upon rite, all dark, he was heaping;
His power was felt to earth's uttermost bound.

Then Freedom called to the voyager lone,
And gave him her beautiful clime in the west,
Saying, "I've seen your distress and heard your moan;
Here earth's persecuted millions may rest."

Oh, the rapture that leaped from the mariner's breast
When the fresh green land burst forth on his sight!
Like Bethlehem's star that arose in the east,
It brought the glad day they had prayed for so long.



THE NEGLECTED CHORD.

"I'm sad to-night; come cheer my heart;
Of mirth and pleasure let me borrow;
For well I know, where'er thou art,
A stranger there is sorrow!

"My heart was made to dream of love,
Yet it is hid with sorrow!"
She came and whispered, "Look above,
There'll be a bright to-morrow!"

Those sweet words touched the chord
That long had lain neglected,
And o'er my sad and drooping heart
New life and beauty was reflected.

PLANO, TEXAS, 1878.

LINES.

Oh, many a day,
In my childish way,
I have watched the clouds as they went to play,
And my soul took fire
With a strange desire
To drift with the clouds away and away.

In a cloud canoe,
Through the ether blue,
As swift as the fleetest bird ever flew,
I would cleave the skies,
And the wondering eyes
Of mortals should follow me as I flew.

I would turn and shift
O'er the mountain rift,
Where the sun ever shines on the white snow drift,
Where no climbing vines
Or no graceful pines
In their rustic beauty their heads uplift;

Where the lone pole-star
Is gleaming afar,

Where oceans of ice the voyage-ships bar—
To those lands of snow,
Where the chill moon's glow
Gleams over the hills and mountains of snow ;

Or I'd turn and float
Like an oarless boat
To lands and to seas yet far more remote,
Where the babbling rills
From fair southern hills
Winding and sparkling down their borders float.

Like a fairy sprite
In the dead of night,
When the soft moon floods the earth with her light,
I'd rest on her beams,
Over crystal streams
And Edens of flowers that whisper delight.

Oh, such are the gleams
From my childish dreams
When I strayed in youth by forests and streams,
When the lamp of love
Shed its light from above—
I had no knowledge of the world but dreams.

Those dreams of delight,
That made my heart bright,

Vanished and brought me reality's light ;
 Yet, as here I'm sitting,
 My mind is oft flitting
To the hours of youth so gay and so bright.

 In visions so rare
 We're given to share
Of the "blissful features love used to wear ;"
 We dream of great things
 While, on Fancy's wings,
We're borne through the world, unthinking of care.

 'Tis the dream of youth's days,
 Full of silvery rays,
That brightens and cheers our declining days ;
 In age we catch the gleaming
 Of youth's early dreaming,
And go through life thus, and even thus always.

LINES WRITTEN IN MY SISTER'S SCRAP-BOOK.

Dear sister, as some rushing stream
Glides on through shade and sunny gleam
 In rhythmic flow,
The limpid waters oft divide;
Diverging from each other wide
 They sparkling go.

They sing along with ripple soft,
'Till we are fain to think they oft
 Recall to mind
The happy hours ere their divide,
They 'long the stream danced side by side,
 Afar behind.

E'en thus we find the stream of life,
Where all our hopes, our fears are rife,
 Our lot is cast.
How oft, alas! we drift away
From loved companions dear and gay,
 'Till wide we 're past.

We voyage each his different ways,
Till, far behind, youth's golden days
 Seem like a dream
Of some enchanted fairy land,
Where pleasure moves at joy's command
 Through sunny gleam.

Yet memory still will ever find
A "vacant corner" in the mind,
 Some tender place
O'er which her lovely form she bends,
And there the names of cherished friends
 Doth fondly trace.

We find, as drifting on we go,
There's less of joy and more of woe,
 And weep to find
Youth's fairy dreams so sadly wrong;
The hopes we nourished, bright and strong,
 Are wrecked, declined.

How many days that dawned full fair,
With sunbeams falling every where
 In tranquil light
Seemed to foretell a sunny day;
But threatening clouds in dark array
 Came ere the night.

Appearances, oh! never trust,
For, lo! the gilded cask holds dust,

The rose a thorn.

A man may wear a saintly face,
Yet be at heart degraded, base,

A wretch forlorn!

O'er pleasures past grieve not, grieve not,
Though disappointment's oft your lot,

For we are all

Subject to disappointment here,
Unconscious, times, the burning tear

Will steal and fall.

Through storm and sunshine, joy and woe,
Take with you still, where'er you go,

A brother's love.

When life's declining sun goes down
May it rise and shine as suns ne'er shone

In heaven above!

LIFE'S BREVITY.

There are many people who sit
 Ever wearily complaining
That the hours of this life do flit
 With such a short remaining.
They sigh its lack of sweetness,
They mourn its incompleteness,
They wail its rapid fleetness,
 And sit with folded hands,
And such dark gloom upon their faces,
And frowning brows and horrid traces,
That men shun them in all places
 As pestilential lands.

And there are those who go to work
 With patient hands and willing,
Who never swerve aside or shirk,
 But are life's mission filling.
To them the birds are sweetly singing,
For them the beauteous flowers are springing,
And life to them reward is bringing,
 And gives them happiness.

They take no time to think of sorrow,
And still of grief refuse to borrow,
But look with joy unto the morrow,
And thus their lives they bless.

And while one walks in gloom and pain
The other walks in pleasure,
And singeth e'er a glad refrain—

Contentment is a treasure!
To one this life is cheerless, dreary;
Its joy to him 's obscured and bleary;
Through life he goes unblest and weary.

To one this life is real;
He makes it so by ever doing,
By striving still, and still pursuing;
Each day his strength he is renewing
By seeking an Ideal.

BENEFACTORS.

He who makes men laugh
Benefits mankind,
If he, in all his mirth,
A moral shows the mind.

Great is he who makes us laugh
Till we with laughter fill,
But he who makes us *think*
Is e'en a greater still!



LINES.

I've wasted many a precious hour
That might have been employed,
And many a pleasure turned away
I might so much enjoyed;

And many a high-born thought has died
That never was expressed,

And many a cruel wrong has been
That never was redressed ;

And many a noble impulse, too,
And good resolve has died ;
And many things that might have been
Were slain by foolish pride.

I've spent my life in useless grief,
And craved what could not be,
And fretted o'er the slightest thing
That went amiss with me.



LINES.

I saw the flickering stars grow dim
And fade at the approach of day ;
I saw the dewdrop on the flower,
Kissed by the sunbeams, fall away ;

And then I thought, this little life,
So prized and valued at this hour,
Might in an instant lose its glow
And fall, smit by Almighty power.

LINES.

Friend, of illicit love beware ;
Cause not any woman pain.
It is pleasant, but a snare,
And a fell and certain bane.

Whate'er you do, remember this :
(It is, sure, an easy plan),
Treat other ladies like your sis. ;
Ne'er forget you are a man ;

And be sincere in every thing
When the woman plays a part,
And speak the truth, for I would scorn
To trifle with a woman's heart.

FICKLE WOMAN.

"Tides ebb and women *change*."—*Anon.*

Oh, thou who talk'st so seeming wise
About the changing woman,
And seest her in the sluggish tides
That daily ebb and flow, man,
Come, lay your learned wit aside,
And let us spend a season
With good old Common Sense the while,
And have a chat with Reason.

You talk about her changing, sir,
Just like 't was "in the creature,"
But I am thinking *you* will change
When you have learned her nature.
When the cold world has turned its back,
And hate and scorn pursuing,
She, faithful, tends ungrateful man,
Forever mindful, doing.

What though he turn and rudely strike
The form that's round him tending,
That slaves for him through heat and cold,
And o'er his sick-bed's bending,

She does not him forsake, oh, no!
For 't was her nature ever,
Where her affections centered are
To there be true forever.

I think it very strange, my friend,
That you thus note *her* changing,
While man himself is like the bee,
From flower to flower ranging.
How many women causeless change?
Now mind and tell me true, man;
The truest friends I've ever had
Have been the fickle women!

Of course, with coxcombs she at times
Will love and flirt a little;
She'll humor them perhaps a day,
And hear their senseless tattle,
But when such talk grows dull to her
She lightly tells him, "Go, man!"
And she does right, upon my word;
The Lord increase such women!

I've heard it said where woman loves
She loves unto the last,
Nor dreads to face a world of scorn,
Nor shrinks before the blast.

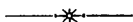
A woman's love's a jewel, sir,
When given to a true man!
And he who prizes not her love
Is surely no human.

Just give me one true woman's love
To aid, to guide, to bless me;
Then, in this dark world's bleakest hour,
Oh, nothing shall distress me.
Just give me her unwavering trust,
And it shall be my anchor;
Then I can stand, nor care a cent
For this world's scorn and rancor.

And now, my friend, go to your room,
And there in secret ponder,
Reject each thought of prejudice,
Let no ill feeling wander,
And study well man's life and hers—
The tender, finer feeling—
And you will be surprised, indeed,
At that which is revealing.

E'en go and judge your fellow man
As you'd be judged by him,
And still by women do the same
As you'd be done by them,

And when you've done your duty well,
All patiently have striven,
Then by the fickle sex at length
Your faults *may* be forgiven.



THE ROSE-BUD.

As I went forth one bright May morn
My 'customed daily work to do,
I spied upon a wayside thorn
A rose-bud bursting into view.

I watched it as the hours went by,
And there at eve oft sought repose
'Till it was grown. Ah! now, thought I,
Next morn we'll see a beauteous rose.

But, ah! when day's king fled the earth,
On distant countries shed its flame,
When sons of men were high in mirth,
The foul corroding canker came!

It came and entered in its heart
And ate its little life away,
And when morn threw the mists apart
I saw its sickened form decay.

Its little leaves curled up in grief,
And grieved like mortals do to die ;
The soft wind murmured o'er each leaf,
And playful zephyrs seemed to sigh.

But save from these no mourners there
Did gather round or weep apart
(For things rolled on as wont they were),
Except this wayward, sinful heart.

I stood by it awhile and thought,
For somehow in that dying flower
A view of life seemed closely wrought,
And called the feelings into power.

I thought of life's mysterious day
And those who sport along its light,
Who dance and sing and laugh and play,
But perish long before the night.

I thought how oft on life's highway
The rose-buds perish on the stem,

With none to weep their sad decay,
For no one spends a thought on them.

How many come with promise fair,
And glad the eye with graceful form,
But while we love, the blight is there,
The fell corroding canker-worm!

They droop and fall unwept away,
And still the world goes wheeling round;
Man nor wrecks nor heeds man's decay
Till he, poor wretch, by death is found.

Although the flowers droop and die
Unwept beneath the canker's breath,
There still is ONE whose watchful eye
Regards the humblest flower's death.

WEARY.

'Tis twilight hour : The lovely day
Beyond the west has gone away,
Weird shadows stray about the plain,
And night assumes imperial reign ;
The world is resting calm and deep
In gentle and refreshing sleep.
There is such stillness every where,
No sound is heard to break the air
Save where the cow-bells' drowsy tingle
Beats time off in some distant dingle,
Or where yon soft-meandering stream ;
Trickles musical as a dream,
Or where the beetles wheel and scream,
The little birdies in their nest,
And all the world is wrapt in rest.

I gaze into the murky air,
For I am weary-worn with care,
My hands are tired, and my feet
From rounds that they must oft repeat ;
My mind is burdened with deep thought,
For I have delved so long and sought

The precious gems that buried lie
Of knowledge—sought so long that I
Have lost the elastic step of youth,
Its glow, its wiles, its joy ; in sooth
There is a vague and wild unrest
Forever roaming through my breast,
A restless longing after rest.

Like one exiled afar from home,
Unknown through stranger lands to roam,
I turn and peer down Thought's abyss
To catch a thought of that I wis
That can not be.

 . But pause and wait.
So speaks inexorable fate :
The narrow house is small and straight,
 The narrow house is dark and chill,
And there the lowly and the great
 Will cease from every pang and ill,
And there, from labor dispossessed,
Thou'lt lay thee down and be at rest.

WORDS FITLY SPOKEN.

Alas! how seld in this blind world of ours
Words fitly spoken reach the famished ear.
The weary heart, that sought so long for cheer,
Found it not through the all-desolate hours,
But walked in grief beneath the fated powers;
Because the fitly-spoken words so dear
And pregnant with comfort it failed to hear,
It by the wayside fell, cast from 'life's bowers!
And do you ask why seld are fitly spoken
The words we thirst for? 'Tis the heart of man,
So full of prejudice, and obstinate;
Ignorance, foolish pride, by these 'tis broken,
And our proud hearts relent not as we look on
And see them lost—these wretched sons of fate.

THE REBUKE.

I asked my love one day, when I was sad
And grief lay heavily upon my heart,
That why it was when all the world was glad
I still must live unfriended and apart.

Her gentle eyes to mine upturning smiled,
As she replied in tones of soft rebuke,
“And wouldst thou to the world be reconciled?
Have it love thee? Take off that haughty look,

“And from thy lip, cold misanthropic scorn;
Send not away those who thy friends would be,
Though e’er so homely. Do this, and friends are
born
Unto thee, to fill thy life with glee.”

And here her words renewed their sweet reprove,
“Wouldst have others love thee? Then learn to love!”

SONG.

When favoring fortune droops her head,
When hope's fair flowers are withered, dead,
Despair above us burst,
What can we do but smile at fate,
And stand with sturdy heart elate,
And bid him do his worst!

Then, while we may, let's dance and sing,
While joy flits by on wanton wing,
And pleasure's tripping by,
Fill high the glass with wine that glows!
Another day may bring us woes,
And tears bedim each eye.

JULY 31, 1881.

“THE WINTRY DAYS ARE COMING.”

Alas! sweet summer's gone,
And all her lovely charms are fled;
The sweetest flower that bloomed
Beneath the sod lies cold and dead.

The birds have taken their lonely flight
To far-off climes unknown,
And, yes, the sweet-songed bird, the robin,
For warmer climes has flown.

The hunter's joy, the wild goose' conk,
Once more is heard upon the plain;
The wintry winds begin to wail,
And winter's breath is felt again.

WOODBURN, KY., Oct. 18, 1877.

IN THE TWILIGHT.

I sit in the twilight often

When worn with labor and care,
And think of the days that perished—
Of the days so bright and fair,

When I wandered, a gay stripling,
In the fields of waving green,
When the birds were singing sweetly,
And the fairest flowers were seen;

When I plowed the corn, light-hearted,
And carelessly turned the sod
Without a thought of the future,
Or of Nature's laws and of God;

When I gathered the wild rose-blooms
In the cool and rustling wood—
The violets, pretty flowers,
That grew in its solitude;

When I watched the squirrels frisking
And leaping about in glee
From tall black-jack to hickory,
And from white to red-oak tree;

When youthful friends were round me—
The friends that I loved so well—
And a thousand thoughts and fancies
I can find no words to tell.

I muse on these memories olden,
As in the twilight I take
A glimpse of that time and the present,
Till my heart is ready to break.

I call to mind when I parted
From scenes that I held most dear,
And came to a land of strangers,
That knew not my love nor cheer;

Though they treated me well, kindly,
I thought that I never could
Be reconciled to their manners,
They seemed so rustic and rude.

So I went day and night grieving
Till life was a weight to me,
And for months I sicken'd sadly,
For health, a stranger to me,

Coldly barred her doors against me;
Grief and despondency came,

And, seeing me out unprotected,
Made horrible war on my frame,

And, sick at heart, I went thinking
Of the ups and downs of life,
Of the winds forever beating,
Of the tempests always rife.

I thought of the past—its pleasures—
And then of the dreary *now*,
And I saw no hope in the future
But that of hardship and woe,

Then I turned in tears so bitter,
And bade an adieu to hope—
My last oar broken and shivered,
With merciless waves to cope!

I thought of the rich, the wealthy,
Compared my life with their own,
And I wondered why some were rich
And many poor and alone!

And why the rich should be greedy
When thousands so sadly need;
Why the bad seemed always wealthy
And prospered in all their deeds;

And why the good should be homeless,
And ever unfortunate;
Should be shaken, and driven, and drifted
By every gust of fate.

My heart grew impious and wicked,
And filled with ungodly thought,
While around and about my soul
A web the Evil One wrought,

Till I sat one eve in the twilight
Watching the stars in the sky,
When I felt a calm come o'er me,
I knew not from whence or why.

'Way on, where worlds go wheeling
In all their splendor and grace,
Where I lost the vision of sight,
Thought bridged infinity's space,

I saw enthroned in great glory
The land of heavenly birth,
More pure than the purest snow-flake
That ever fell to the earth!

And I saw there the poor, the lowly,
Who struggled on earth in pain;

They were recompensed now for toil—
In peace forever to reign!

There I saw a beautiful maiden
With a sweetness all divine,
And she looked with such sweet pity
Into this poor heart of mine,

That I felt her heavenly presence,
And her silver voice did say
(Now this was sweet Hope, the fairy
That I had driven away):

“You see who are blest in heaven—
The faithful, good, and true,
While the bad are cast to darkness—
The same hope’s given to you.

“Fret not if this life has evil,
For God has willed it to be,”
And she flew away to heaven,
But left her anchor with me.

So, I often sit in the twilight
When worn with labor and care,
And thus is despondency quelled,
And my load grows light as air.

Yes, I love to sit in the twilight,
For there do I feel a calm
That brightens my soul with healing,
Like unto Gilead's balm.



THE DAYS OF DREAMING.

Thou art, in sooth, sweet days of youth,
Our brightest days of dreaming,
None others are one half so fair
As thou, in sooth, for dreaming.

To brighter skies we ne'er will rise
Than those we see in dreaming,
No clouds come, nor thoughts of gloom
In those sweet days of dreaming.

NIGHTFALL.

When my daily task is done
And I sit down to rest,
And watch the red sunbeams vanish
And sink along the west,

As twilight kisses the green hills,
Making weird shapes in air,
The lowing kine wend slowly home,
All things to rest repair;

When no sound breaks upon the ear
But the wandering beetle tribe,
Oh, then sweet thoughts come o'er me
No mortal can describe!

My heart is filled full of music,
And peace and holy calm;
For all the cares and toils of day,
It serveth as a balm.

What though my life is made of toil,
And I must work each day,

And I sometimes grow despondent,
And lose sight of hope's ray,

When I am downhearted and weary,
Ready to yield the race,
(For I am but a farmer boy
The world denies a place,

Yet I court not the cold, proud world,
And will not ape its ways),
Let me sit in my door at night
While thoughts unbridled stray,

For, as I gaze in the blue sky,
Lit by the moon and stars
That send o'er the world at night
Their bright and soothing bars,

I feel this holy depth of thought
That's something near divine,
And I know 't is not of this earth,
But of some heavenly clime.

SELFISHNESS.

We bear many a load through life
That there's no need of taking,
We fail in many an adverse strife,
Ourselves our worst foes making;
Yet we might make our lives more blest
And many a passion smother,
And oft relieve the poor oppressed
By helping one another.

But when we feel inclined to grant
The humbly-made petition,
Our folly, rising up, will rant
And rail at their condition;
And pride and folly, these combined,
Our kindly feelings smother,
Until we're coldly disinclined
From helping one another.

And thus our hearts are hardened till,
So selfish is our nature,
We follow still the low-born will
And scorn to help a creature.

We're ruled by self and greed for gold,
And they will ever smother
The finest feelings ever told,
And alienate each other.

But vain to rail at selfish man!
For he was selfish ever;
From lordly rank to vulgar clan
Doth rage the "catching fever."
The crack-brained lawyer's self conceit
Turns up its nose at poor folks,
As though it would not wipe its feet
On them without demur, folks!

His stiff-necked pride cocks up his head,
A wise disgusting stare, man,
He stalks with such majestic tread
As though he "walked the air," man;
And learned fools who know so much
They really know nothing,
All dandies, coxcombs, fops, and such
Are filled with *gas* for stuffing.

The wealthy struts with lordly strides,
He heartless grinds the poor man
(His gain, alas! is all he prides),
And turns him from his door, man;

And broadcloth fools and velvet gents,
Preferred to homespun honor,
Deceitful tongues breathe sentiments
As foul as what lies under.

Oh! thus we delve about and grope
In shades of darkness ever,
And leave our brother man to cope
Without our aid forever.
We struggle each against the flood,
But sink, alas! down further,
When we might well the storm withstood
By helping one another.

The weight that one would sink beneath
Is lightly borne by two men,
They thus brace up and freely breathe,
And go unworried through, men.
Friends, let us then by wise command
Bid selfish passions smother,
And aye extend a helping hand
To aid a fallen brother.

THE OLD NORSE KING.

An old Norse king, one stormy night,
Sat in the light of his blazing fire ;
The dry log burned, the blaze grew bright
Until the hall was filled with light,
As the blaze kept leaping higher and higher.

The tempest madly raged without,
And tossed the grandest trees in its might,
As soldiers storm a strong redoubt,
And beat against the walls and shout,
So it beat the king's great hall that night.

Darker than Egypt was the night,
And the wind blew with a hollow sound ;
The old king's hall was made more bright
By the darkness without ; the light
Filled the hall's dark recesses around.

Such is the night, as by his fire
The old king talks with his counsellors

Of human life and its desire,
Its destiny and passion fire,
And the thoughts of each in turn he hears.

And while they talk a sound is heard,
As, fluttering from the wind and rain,
In at the window comes a bird,
Flies o'er them and is then unheard,
For it flies through the window again.

"Such," said the king, "is the life of man;
Out of the darkness into the light,
Through the light into the darkness again;
Lost in the storm and chaos again,
Lost in the dark, tempestuous night!"

"Aye," said a courtier, bent with years,
And the light in his old eyes was fond,
And they sparkled with unshed tears,
"Aye, the bird's flight a lesson bears,
For the bird has a nest beyond!"

TO EUCLID M. COX.

Dear Euke, I've often thought I'd write
You some memento, though but slight
 And crude 't may be,
Something 't will you of me remind
When youth's gay hours say, far behind,
 Remember me.

But what I'll write I know not now,
For old Pegasus doth avow
 He'll not be rode,
By bucking, snorting, prancing round,
And kicking high his heels; I'm bound
 I do get throwed!

He is a wild, unruly beast;
He'll take the studs nor budge the least
 'F you try to guide him;
But loose, my friend, the tightened reins
And forth he bounds across the plains
 If you would ride him.

This morn I tried to turn his head
And make him go my way instead,
Just like a fool!

But up to Waxahachie, see,
He turned as if he'd say to me,
"Your friend at school."

Thither I'll let him wend his way,
And bend my verse to you to-day,
My honest friend.

Now, in old Marvin College walls
Again you walk her classic halls
And weary bend

Your thought to find some hidden lore
Immersed in books of learned store,
And many a day
Your head with racking pains will ache,
And fevers burn and sickness make
Your form her prey.

And many a night your wearied head
You'll lay upon a sleepless bed
Before your eye,
Beyond the snow-capped Alps, discern—
Oh, clime for which my soul doth yearn—
Fair Italy.

But if the road be rough, my friend,
And hard to go, at least 't will end,
 And you will turn
With mingled feelings in your breast,
A sense of joyous pride possessed,
 Your heart will burn,

As, looking out upon the world,
You see 'neath sunny skies unfurled
 Life's charming scenes,
Hope's lovely anchor standing by
At once will catch your raptured eye;
 Her beamy smiles

Will joys impart I can not tell.
Build high your hopes, but build them well.
 There be some men
Who say we should not look too high
Lest we should fall, and failure's eye
 Should mock us then.

But if our aims are n't high, how, pray,
Are we to reach life's lofty way?
 Will't be by chance?
Deluded fools, who grope along
The low desires of men among!
 Oh, blind *mis*chance!

Be not affected; put not on
A look or passion not your own,
 But in your heart
Feed well the germ of love and truth;
Pretense, hypocrisy, in sooth,
 Take not a part

In them, but bar with steel thy door
'Gainst them and feignéd love,
 And scorn deceit
As poison of the vilest kind.
Be true, my friend, and you will find
 How life is sweet.

All hollow-heartedness I hate,
And apish fools who serve the great;
 Who cringe and fawn
With flattery and servile tongue
As loathsome as the very d—
 Out on the lawn.

Improve, my friend, "each shining hour,"
Remembering still that lore is power
 If aptly used,
But if perverted from its end
Like all things else, my youthful friend,
 Can be abused.

But as for me, no more I'll stand
In college with my classmate band
 With happy heart,
But far away upon life's sea
My bark must drift continually
 To distant port.

I know not what's in store for thee,
But confident your life will be
 Not void of good;
And in your country may your name
Rise to an envious point of fame
 As some have stood.

But as for me I'll spend my time
In stolen hours spinning rhyme,
 Content to work
Through the long hours of the day
For food to keep me from decay;
 I'll never shirk.

Life's busy scenes were not for me,
But rural life and poesy,
 And charming love,
Though love has been my dearest foe,
And caused me many a pang of woe,
 All else above.

I know the poet's life, 't is said,
Is full of sorrow, hardship, dread,
 And in this day
'T is almost pointed at in scorn
By some, though 't is the noblest born
 That greets the day.

And hence it is my heart is sad,
That Poesy, the the charming maid,
 Is so abused,
While pois'nous Fiction takes her place,
Her evil power in the race
 Is boldly used.

But let the proud, cold-blooded sneer;
As long as any one will hear
 I'll sing away,
Content to hear my feeble song
Borne by the common voice along
 One little day.

For life is fleeting like a day;
A transient shade, 't will pass away
 As breath of wind;
And whether fame is short or long,
It matters not; a common doom
 Will seal the end.

But while I've life and honor's part,
I'll give to you a true friend's heart,

Who am so fervent,
And write myself fore'er and aye,
Way down to life's remotest day,

Your friend and servant,

TOM. S. TURNER.



TO MORGAN T. CRAFT.

From plowing in the field all day
I'll cast my tired thoughts away
And spend a time,
While the gay muses lend their light,
In writing to my friend to-night
In simple rhyme.

I still am digging in the fields
The produce that dame Nature yields
From bounteous store ;

I still am wandering by the rills,
Still listening to the birdies trills
As erst of yore.

The wagging world continues on
Its jogging course beneath the sun
In steady quiet,
To us who live exempt from wars,
The city's bustle and the jars
Of city riot.

I've often thought, my honest friend,
The happiest life a man can spend
Is on the farm;
Beneath the rustic arching sky
His calm life passes gently by
Through Nature's charm.

'Tis true his hands are full of toil;
'Tis true he e'er must till the soil
And hoe the ground;
Must work beneath the summer sun;
Work through all kinds of weather on
The long year round.

'Tis true that sometimes still he bears
A burden of perplexing cares;
All this I own,

But then they can not always last,
And sweet delight is round him cast
When they are flown.

Ask of that man whose days belong
To the city's jostling, fretting throng—
Go ask of him
If he's e'er free from galling care.
A sigh escapes his lips, and—there!
His eyes are dim!

Yes, blinding tears rush to his eyes
As he with trembling voice replies:
“No, no, my child!
I'm oft harassed, distressed in mind
Lest some misfortune rise behind,
Some mischance wild

Should break above my head some day
And sweep my hoarded wealth away!
And then the pain
Of being poor! Ah, me! ah, me!
But I would give my wealth to be
A boy again!”

Seek that man's home and you'll see there
That luxury no pains doth spare
To charm the eye,

Though fair and bright the works of art,
They somehow fail to charm the *heart*.

Peace passes by.

But let us leave the crowded street
And seek the farmer's lone retreat
 Among the hills;
A thousand charms line every hand,
While winding down the adjacent land
 Sing tiny rills;

The crops in all the fields are green;
The mocking-bird and thrush are seen,
 The lark and jay,
The sparrows hopping on the ground,
While the wild flowers blooming round
 New charms display.

See his cottage near yonder brook,
Amid bright flowers the fairest—look
 What charm is there,
What peace is there, domestic glow,
Sweet innocence and mirth I trow,
 So true and fair.

When home that farmer comes at night
His soul is calm, his face is bright,
 His mind is free;

His laughing children crowd around,
He taketh them in joy profound
 Upon his knee,

While in his eye you see the shine
Of happiness almost divine.

 Sure I have seen,
In my sojourn upon the earth,
Of innocent, domestic mirth
 No purer scene.

True happiness the rustic's lot,
True love dwells in his cozy cot,
 And Nature's song
The joyous birds around him sing,
And time flits by rejoicing
 His whole life long.

But hold! my Muse has gone astray
In her own rambling, careless way,
 Till I've forgot
What I intended, should have said,
And every soul's been in the bed
 Three hours I wot!

Lord, how they snore! such frightful sound
Would wake the dead from sleep profound
 To life, almost,

And superstition puts a dread
Of some *strange* fancies in my head—
“*Beware of ghosts!*”

Quick! let me get into my bed
And pull the quilts up o’er my head,
And shut my eyes,
And rest me in dear Morpheus’ arms
Secure from ghosts and night’s alarms
Till morrow rise.

Good Lord! what’s gotten into my head?
Why, here, I’ve gotten into my bed
And left my light!
So now I’ve got to get right out
And blow this poky old light out!
Good night! good night!*

TOMMIE S. TURNER.

*In reply to the above, I received the beautiful poem, “To Tom,” from Morgan T. Craft, which he has kindly permitted me to publish, and which follows on next page. I feel proud of this tribute of my friend, and am glad of the privilege of presenting it to my readers, for I am sure they will appreciate it. This talented but unfortunate young poet has written many meritorious poems.

TO TOM.

'Twixt cup and lip there's many a slip,
In life there's many a sorrow,
And many a pain—to sigh is vain—
Man dreads his each to-morrow.

But still, to me as well's to thee
There's left one lasting pleasure,
To take a pen and write a friend—
A friend like you, a treasure.

With fitness rare I do declare
You've written up "ye granger;"
The toil in this, in that the bliss
You know to me's no stranger.

So, dear Tommié! you've left to me
No subject for a sermon,
And what I'll write to you to-night
The future must determine,

For well you know the farmer's woe,
His joy and grief and sorrow,

Must be my scope unless I hope
To steal, or beg or borrow!

To beg or steal is not my deal;
I know not how to plunder,
And, Sacred Three, preserve Thou me
From using borrowed thunder!

There's one who turns (but not a Burns)
The daisy on the mountain;
Each flower that blows, its being owes,
Like we, to one pure Fountain.

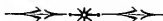
This brawny hand must till the land
(’T will shirk its duty never),
But here's a heart, in every part
As true as steel forever.

And, Tom, to you ’t will e’er be true
In sunshine's glint or shadow,
A purling stream of fond esteem
A-rippling through its meadow.

And may the New Year bring no tear
Of sorrow at its closing,
But leave thee rest as in the west
Thy sun is sweet reposing;

May ne'er a pain be yours again,
But years of bliss full many,
And pleasures rare, 's the humble prayer
Of your devoted TENNIE.

LONDON, January 11, 1882.



RETROSPECTION.

I'm sick at heart and sad to-night,
And long to see once more
The scenes, the haunts, the cherished friends
I left on youth's bright shore.
Come, Memory, from thy still abode,
Where thou so long hath slept,
And hand in hand we'll trace that land
O'er which we've often met.

And as we view that fairy land
Wilt thou not sing to me
Some fragments of the happy songs
Of youth, so full of glee?

The memory of the years that died
Is dearer to the heart
Than all the joys that wealth or fame
Can to the mind impart.

Oh, 'tis the music of the soul,
So soft, so deep, so sweet,
The poet, in his grandest verse,
Must leave as incomplete
As artist who with skillful touch
Would unto us restore
The primal beauty and the charm
That ancient Eden wore.

There was a time I strayed at will
With pleasure for my guide,
And had no thoughts the time would come
When I'd be severed wide
From dear delights and happy scenes
As boyhood only knows—
I careless plucked the flowers wild,
The lily and the rose;

And where the forest, ripe with age,
Lifts up its mighty arms,
I've wondering strayed in the lovely spring
And spied a thousand charms

In sturdy oaks and stately elms
And giant sycamores,
When infant buds put forth their leaves
All opening into flowers.

'T is then the robin sweetly sings,
The red-bird, lark, and jay,
The tender thrush and swinging-bird,
Rejoicing all the day.
And when the sun behind the hills
Withdrew the day and light,
The mocking-bird upon my house
Made music all the night.

And down where Drake's creek graceful flows
And sparkling winds away,
I've strayed along its wooded banks
With spirits light and gay;
Or gathered shells, or sat and watched
The fishes swim about,
And wistful eyed the darting perch,
Or lazy, sleepy trout.

And there were friends so innocent
And full of youthful cheer,
Who dreamed not life had roughs and toughs
Or e'en contained a care.

'T would please the old folks' hearts so much,
And they their hands would clap
To see us at the parties play
At blindman's buff and snap;

And there was ONE, a gentle friend,
Whose name I can not tell,
But in affection's trusting heart
Her image e'er shall dwell;
'T will spread a halo round the soul
When pained with care and grief,
And give to burdened, wearied thought,
A gentle, kind relief.

How gladly turns the weary man
From labor all away
To glance into that sunny time
"When first he met Love's ray!"
The birds were singing from the trees,
The dew was on the flowers,
And dimpling rills stole wimpling by,
And gayly danced the hours.

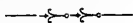
And thus, as Memory guides me on,
I find at every turn
Some youthful joy that wakes a spell,
That breathes into my soul

A calm dispelling all the gloom.
Oh, ever thus from grief
In Memory's sunny, fairy land
I find a sweet relief!

BELL SPRINGS, March, 1882.

LOVE POEMS.

LOVE POEMS.



LOVE.

Let others sing in lofty praise
The joys that wine can measure,
But I will sing in soul-felt lays
Of Love's delightful pleasure!

In golden palaces of lords,
Or humble cots of peasants,
It thrills the heart with tender words
That make a life more pleasant.

The farmer-boy beside the rill,
When Luna bright is shining,
Is wont to feel his pulses thrill
And stray with heart repining

For Betsy Jane or lovely Lou,
Or winsome, witching Mary,
Or Polly, Meg, or blue-eyed Sue,
Molly, Nan, or Carrie.

Oh, tender days, in youth's bright hours,
When hope is brightly beaming,
And young love roves among the flowers
And turns the heart to dreaming.

Yet not alone in youth's sweet prime
Is love's deep fire burning,
For I have seen in silvered time
Its tender flame still burning!

It somehow twines about the heart
And enters in its portals;
Oh! lasting bliss this flame imparts
Into the life of mortals.

The happiest days man spends on earth
Always to *this* he traces;
It gives to life its charm and mirth
And many a woe erases.

Then give to me some pleasant vale
Where flowers wild are growing,
Where ne'er a note from sorrow's wail
Nor wintry winds are blowing,

With love to grace my humble cot,
Love that true advises,
And I will show the happiest lot
To which a mortal rises.

“I MET YOUNG LOVE WHEN LIFE WAS
YOUNG.”

I met young Love when life was young
And pleasure beaming high,
When honeyed words dropped from his tongue
And rapture fired his eye.
Such promises of joy and bliss
Beyond degree he gave,
That then and there I vowed for life
To be his constant slave.

I reveled then in gay delight
And tripped to notes of bliss,
I fed my soul with charming food
From Love's delicious kiss;
But 't was not long until he changed,
And sad the change, for oh,
He bound me round with iron bands
And prisoned me in woe!

His cruelty in deep despair
I have lamented long;
Ah! sore I've wept that one so fair
Could yield to deed so wrong.

Of from my lonely prison halls
His mirthful form I see,
My tyrant bask in beauty's smiles,
Oh, artful witchery!

Oh! cruel Love, oh! romping Love,
Thou art a lovely thing,
But yet in every sweet of thine
There is a poisonous sting!
And many a heart has felt its pang,
Its poison eating there,
And yielded up the charm of life
To bitter, lost despair!

My Love is, oh! a cruel lord;
He keeps me fastened here,
While he goes gayly ranting round
In folly's ceaseless stir;
And grievous is the direful pain—
A pain that knows no cures—
To know I'll be a pris'ner bound
As long as life endures!

“WHEN LIFE BLUSHED 'NEATH THE SKY
OF MAY.”

When life blushed 'neath the sky of May
And Hope's young bud was in my breast,
Young Love came romping o'er the way
And sighed and begged to be my guest.

“Your home,” quoth he, “is plenty's store,
And I'm a hapless stranger lone,
Out in the stormy winter's roar!
In pity heed my woeful moan.

“You live *alone* in spacious halls,
With every thing to cheer the heart,
Yet here, methinks, an echo calls,
Asking why you thus dwell apart.

“In vain does Beauty smile for thee,
While others fall beneath her fire.
Why, Beauty's soul is full of glee!
How canst thou be so cruel, sire!

“'Tis selfish, sir, to dwell alone,
Defiance bid at Beauty's power,

And were you wise you'd straightway own
That they who do are cross and sour!

"No passion blood flows in the veins
Of him whose breast she fails to fire,
And blisses sweet, delightful reigns,
By them are never, never felt!"

"Cease, silly elf! such foolish lore,
For Love and Beauty both are vain;
And as for Hymen, child, I swore
I'd never yield unto his chains!"

Scarce had these words my lips escaped
When, lo! the traveler was transformed,
And like a lovely angel shaped—
'T was Cupid, now, for battle armed!

I turned to hide my blushing face,
But he had wound me in his arms,
And ever since, and time or place,
I've been a slave to Beauty's charms!

THE STOLEN BOW.

The God of Love one morn at light
Sought Venus in dismay,
For while he slept some selfish wight
Had stol'n his bow away!

Fair Venus soothed the troubled mind,
And told with childish glee
That if the thief-wight he could find
How sweet revenge would be.

At this he laughed and clapped his hands,
And joyously did go,
And roamed in disguise foreign lands
Long searching for his bow.

At last, when withered hope was dead
And he was comfortless,
He found it in a bach'lor's shed—
Naught could his joy express.

“Kind stranger, wilt thou let me see
Yon bow so strangely wrought?”

Then he reached up and took the bow,
Which twanged beneath his touch.

"I value this as costly prize;
'Tis worth its weight in gold."
"And well you may," young Love replies,
"Its story, if 't was told,

"Might well amuse." "In truth it may;
I stole it from a lad
One night, and young hearts were his prey,
Who now, no doubt, is sad!"

"Its strength," says Love, "I fain would try;
Please hand me down a dart."
He fits the shaft and lets it fly;
It rankles in his heart!

The stranger now drops his disguise,
And, lo! 'tis Cupid's form!
Great is the wounded man's surprise,
Who views him in alarm.

"Now, selfish sir, steal ne'er my bow
Again, or surely you
Shall feel my wrath-inflicting woe;
And now, Monsieur, adieu!"

SONG.

Oh, many a joyous hour was mine
When lovely youth possessed me ;
I cooled my lips with charming wine
And love and fortune blessed me.
Unknown to care I often strayed
Deep in the forest dreaming,
The bright sunbeams around me played,
And all was beauteous seeming.

Oh, in those days of sweet delight
Then my sweet May was smiling,
She turned to day the darkest night,
The saddest hour beguiling.
She, like a sunbeam rich and rare,
Was 'long my pathway playing ;
Ah ! then, I little thought of care
When she was by me straying.

But time, alas ! with stern decree
Has forced our lives asunder,
And many a mile all wearily
It has been my lot to wander ;

Yet still at times in feast or song
I feel my heart reviving,
And burning deep the passions strong
I feel of youth surviving.

Ye bards, who chant in labored song
About your future glory,
Ye may your songs in might prolong
Until your heads are hoary,
But ye can sing in all your lays
No joys like youth's fair morning,
When life is lit with love's sweet lays
And joy her skies adorning.



WRITTEN FOR A YOUNG FRIEND.

I think of thee, I think of thee,
When fair morn springs from rosy skies;
I think of thee the livelong day,
And when the day all drooping dies
Then Fancy's sleepless lids give me
Sweet dreams of thee, sweet dreams of thee!

I love thee not that thou art fair,
But for thy true, confiding heart.
The promise true you gave to me
Shall never from my mind depart.
'Tis this sweet fancy gives to me
In dreams of thee, sweet dreams of thee!

It matters not though tempests wild
Howl fiercely through this rolling sphere!
Through adverse winds or wintry snows,
Or absence, thou wilt still be dear;
For memory oft will give to me
Sweet dreams of thee, sweet dreams of thee!

Oh, darling, e'er be true to me!
For, should you break the promised vow,
This world would be a dreary place,
And full to me of grief and woe.
Oh, then, be true as I to thee,
Be true to me, be true to me!

"THE DAY WHEN I FORGET THEE."

The day when I forget thee, love,
Will be all draped in mourning,
And cold and desolate this heart
To dark despair be turning.
I love thee well, too deeply, love,
To ever cease to love thee,
Though storms may rise and adverse skies
In anger frown above me.

Your cheek is like the rose's bloom
That nods in the dewy morning;
Your voice it is so soft and light,
Your eyes are full of charming.
Oh, could I be so cruel, then,
E'er to forget, regret thee;
Oh, chilled and stilled will be my heart
The day when I forget thee!

WHEN I'LL CEASE TO LOVE YOU.

When Ash Creek turns its waters back,
 Flowing toward its fountain,
When the dimpling rill of its own will
 Goes flowing *up* the mountain,
When the dove forgets to love its mate,
 The mock-bird tires of singing,
When the lark's shrill note no more shall float
 (Gay music sweetly ringing);
When the stars of heaven cease to shine,
 The moonbeams cease to quiver,
And till all the world in death is hurled
 Oh, I'll forget thee—never!

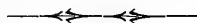
“IF THOU WILT BE MY DEARIE.”

Come, let me sing the song of love
In simple notes and free,
I'll sing from my true heart, sweet maid,
And dedicate to thee.
The hour when first you crossed my path
Was, oh! so gay and cheery,
My heart's swift beating told me then
That I had met my dearie.

And from that hour, I felt it then,
My heart no more should rove,
But follow thee where'er thou went,
And thou shouldst be my love.
To gain thy love is now my aim,
And though I'm sad and weary,
Yet thou canst bless my life for aye
If thou wilt be my dearie!

I boast not lands of wide extent,
Or name of splendid line,
But willing hands and faithful heart,
That loves thee well, are mine.

'Tis thou canst bless my life for aye,
And make it, oh ! so cheery ;
And the wealth of a true heart is thine
If thou wilt be my dearie.



SUSPENSE.

Oh, the agony that dwells
In that little word—suspense !
Every fleeting moment tells
Something to alarm the sense.
The heart pent in sorrow lives
While 'tis so, and pines and grieves.

Then, oh, break, sweet lady fair,
The awful silence of suspense ;
Speak the word that draws me near,
Or the one that drives me hence.
Better, lady, let me go
Than detain me pris'ner so !

TO SOME FLOWERS.

[BEST UNDERSTOOD BY THE LADY WHO WORE THEM.]

Oh, little flowers, with odorous breath,
Ye were so fair when growing
Where nature placed you on the earth,
When first you commenced blowing.

But when upon Miss Sallie's hat
I saw you ranged so neatly,
I ne'er saw flowers on earth yet
That smiled and looked so sweetly.

Miss Sallie, too, before you came
Was like a rose, so pretty,
And shed a glow of love's own flame,
Oh, she was fair and witty.

But now in all wide Ellis's bounds
There's not a maid more charming;
One tender glance the heart confounds,
The *sternest* heart disarming.

ON A SIMILAR SUBJECT.

Oh, once I tuned the tuneful strings
In praise of humble turnip-blooms,
And light my muse on joyous wings
Went singing through their sweet perfumes!

She caught the sweetness they exhale,
And notes of praise leaped from her lips,
While trembling I stood still and pale,
Blushing to hear their gushing slips!

With trembling hand I seized my pen
And plunged it deep into the ink;
Wrote down the words she sung me then,
Wondering, oh, what *you* would think.

But now since you have been so kind
To cull for me a fair bouquet,
Where, oh, where, e'er will I find
Words sweet enough my thanks to say?

I can but say, may life to you
Be full of joy and love-lit bowers;
And when you die and go above,
Be carried on a wreath of flowers!

TO FANNY.

Much to my regret you've said, "Let us quit;
I'm tired of loving at last,
For love groweth cold as soon as its old,
And amorous fancy is past.

"Yes, love is a thing of such delicate wing
And wond'rous design in make,
That if more than a night he stays his flight
His plumage begins to break.

"So, you see, it was meant, when first he was sent
From Venus's garlanded bower,
From flight he should stay never more than a day,
And often not more than an hour!"

I like the gay plan so much, my dear Fan,
I kindly consent thus to part;
Just a little love's good and fires youth's blood,
But too much enslaves the poor heart.

But, as Love goes away, will he not stray
To Arcadian fields again?
Oh, then, will not Bliss renew her warm kiss,
And joy reach its zenith just then?

Dear Fanny, good bye! May the tear or the sigh
 Sometimes recall to your mind
A youth young and gay you left far away
 In the days that drifted behind.

If you meet with a bore, or, worse, with a score,
 And find their love hackneyed and stale,
Just send me some day a pretty bouquet,
 And I'll be with you quick without fail.



THE MAIDEN TO THE MOCKING-BIRD.

Thou singest blithe, my bonny bird;
 Thy notes are gay and light,
For thy young soul so free and wild
 Hath known no care nor blight.

Thou hast not seen amid life's throng
 The false and fickle move,
Or thou wouldst turn with me and weep
 The faithlessness of love.

Alas! that eye which once on mine
Its tender glances turned,
Spake not the language of the heart,
But falsely on me burned,

And I am left alone to-day
Where rude winds harshly blow,
And every breeze that fans the trees
Does but increase my woe.

Sing on, my pretty bird, sing on!
A stranger e'er to grief;
For each sweet note of thine, and light,
Gives my sad heart relief.

Sing on, sing on, my bonny bird!
And ne'er like me awake
To weep the fickleness of love,
Or thy poor heart will break.

EDWARD GREY.

I.

As I was walking out one day
I chanced to meet young Edward Grey ;
His eyes were swollen, his look was sad,
His hair was uncombed on his head,
The whisky fumes were on his breath,
Reckless, uncaring, he did roam.
He cursed the world and railed at fate—
Oh, he had altered so of late!

II.

“What makes this change, young Edward Grey?”
I said. “You who were erst so gay,
This reckless air and careless mien
Ill suit the youth that you have been.
Alack, the day! alack, the day!
When evil star met Edward Grey,
Who once in rustic circles famed
A good and steady boy was named!”

III.

“Alack, my friend! alack the day!”
These bitter words spoke Edward Grey,
“That my young love was torn and crossed;
A wanton’s love was gained and lost!
I loved, and thought my love was true
Till, like a vision, false it flew.
Just when I thought my love was blessed
I held a serpent to my breast!

IV.

“And now farewell to all my bliss,
My peace of mind and happiness;
Henceforth this wretched life will be
A dreary, aimless thing to me.
Farewell to love, the sweet delight;
Farewell to day, and welcome night!
Yea, gloomy night’s unbroken sleep,
From which no more I’ll wake to weep.”

INVOCATION.

TO MISS ANNA.

Little sweetheart, live with me
On the prairie wide and free.
Birds and flowers and humming-bees
Whisper to the heart at ease ;

Wild herds feed upon the plains,
And contentment fondly reigns.
Rove with me down sloping hills
By the babbling, sparkling rills,

When fair Luna from on high
With her glory fills the sky
And the earth and air below.
I am lonely, full of woe,

And the world to me is dark,
Oh, my love, thou art the spark
Can illumine my path so drear—
Sweetest sunshine of the year !

Live with me, and in yon bower,
When the silvery moonbeams lower,
We will listen deep and well
To the words sweet Love doth tell.

How his soft eyes sparkle bright
In the clear and deep moonlight,
When he gently 'gins to tell
Words that make the bosom swell.

Then, sweetheart, why need delay
Keep you from this spot away?
Here I sit and pine for thee,
And the hours pass wearily.

Haste, oh! haste, and quickly come,
Bringing sunshine to my home,
Bringing smiles and winsome ways
To while away life's weary days.

Oh, I love you as my life!
Will you be my darling wife,
And come and live with me
On the prairie wide and free?

SONG.

How shall I woo my handsome Bess?

What message shall I send her,
That it may be like her own self,
So gentle like and tender?

Say, shall it be in courtier phrase,
Set off with words of learning,
Or shall it be the rustic's own,
So true, so deep, so burning?

It can not be the courtier phrase,
With gallant words all laden,
For I am but a country swain
And she a country maiden.

She'd be, with a distrustful eye,
Such high-flung words discerning,
And God forbid a rustic lad
Should ape the ways of learning!

When wild birds go to woo their mates
They go right sweetly singing

The simple songs that nature taught
Till wood and field are ringing.

So I shall woo my gentle Bess
In simple words sincerely,
For only they can tell how true
I love her, and how dearly.



SWEET ANNIE LEROW.

I.

Down deep in my heart
A secret there lies
That I'll only impart
To your bewitching eyes!
For it would not do
For the world to know
That I love *you*,
Sweet Annie Lerow!

II.

How well I remember
When we first met!
It was in December,
But as plain to me yet
As if we'd just met
A day or two ago.
But the world never yet,
Sweet Annie Lerow,

III.

Has ever found out
A secret that lies
Hid in my bosom
From mortal's eyes!
Oh, if you'll meet me
Some summer day,
Down by the sea,
I'll sing thee a lay,

IV.

Where no mortal can hear
Or no eye can see.
There I will not fear
To tell all to thee

About a little home
From the city away,
Where sorrows ne'er come
To mar my bright way.

V.

Birds cease not to sing
The *long* year through,
And do not they remind me,
My darling, of *you*?
Then come to the sea,
Some summer day,
And I'll sing to thee
That beautiful lay.

TO BESSIE.

Come, let me sing the song of love
In simple notes and free;
I'll sing from my true heart, my dear,
And dedicate to thee.

I can not sing in courtly style,
So gallant like and grand,
But I can sing as true, my dear,
And you can understand.

All outward show I do ignore
In women and in men,
And build my temple in the heart
That gently throbs within.

I love you not so much, my dear,
For beauty's form and face
As for thy tender, trustful heart,
And simple, tender grace.

I would that I could say how true
I love you and how well,

But do not ask so hard a task,
For I could never tell.

But I will just sit down by thee
And look into thine eyes,
And we will feel that magic flame
So oft revealed by sighs.

And thus we'll often sit, my Bess,
As life we journey through,
And Heaven above will smile on love
So tender and so true.



TO BESSIE.

I would that my muse some charm could infuse,
Some glow from the tuneful nine,
For then would I write with a pencil of light,
And tell the true love that is mine.

But the tuneful nine in sorrow decline
A task they never could do,

For their grandest swell—oh, it never could tell
My love, dearest Bessie, for you.

So I'll bid them adieu and turn unto you
And get inspiration divine,
And I'll bask in the beams thy gentle eye streams
Till I feel love's music is mine.

Then with throes of delight my song will take flight,
And wing through the regions of Bliss,
At the portals of Fame to deliver my flame,
And say, "Was ever true love like *this?*"

'Twill tell how at morn, with a bosom forlorn,
I arise from my couch with a sigh,
When Aurora springs on her roseate wings
And strays 'long the eastern sky.

And how all the day long my burden of song
Is ever, dear Bessie, of you;
And at night when I stray in dreamland away
Thy form is the dearest I view.

Though the flowers that bloom all colors assume,
From white to scarlet and varied hue,
Yet the precious flowers will ne'er view the hours
When they'll bloom such roses as you.

The sweet bird sings of his mate as he wings
On his flight through the ether blue ;
Though his songs may be sweet they can never repeat
A love like mine, tender and true.

As the years wheel away, though thy charms may
decay,
And the beauty fade from thy brow,
Oh, believe me still, forever you will
Be dear and precious as now.

For in your heart there is honor's part,
Which nature in blessing gave thee,
And she crowned the whole with a loving soul,
And all that is precious to see.

Then, as years wheel along, my burden of song
One source of inspiration will view,
And my heart, through despair or pleasures rare,
Will turn, dearest Bessie, to *you*.

THE END.

As all earth holds
Doth graveward tend,
This little book
Of mine must end.

The grass springs up
On mother earth,
And cheerful flowers
Take their birth.

The grass is green
One little day,
Soon blooming flowers
Must meet decay.

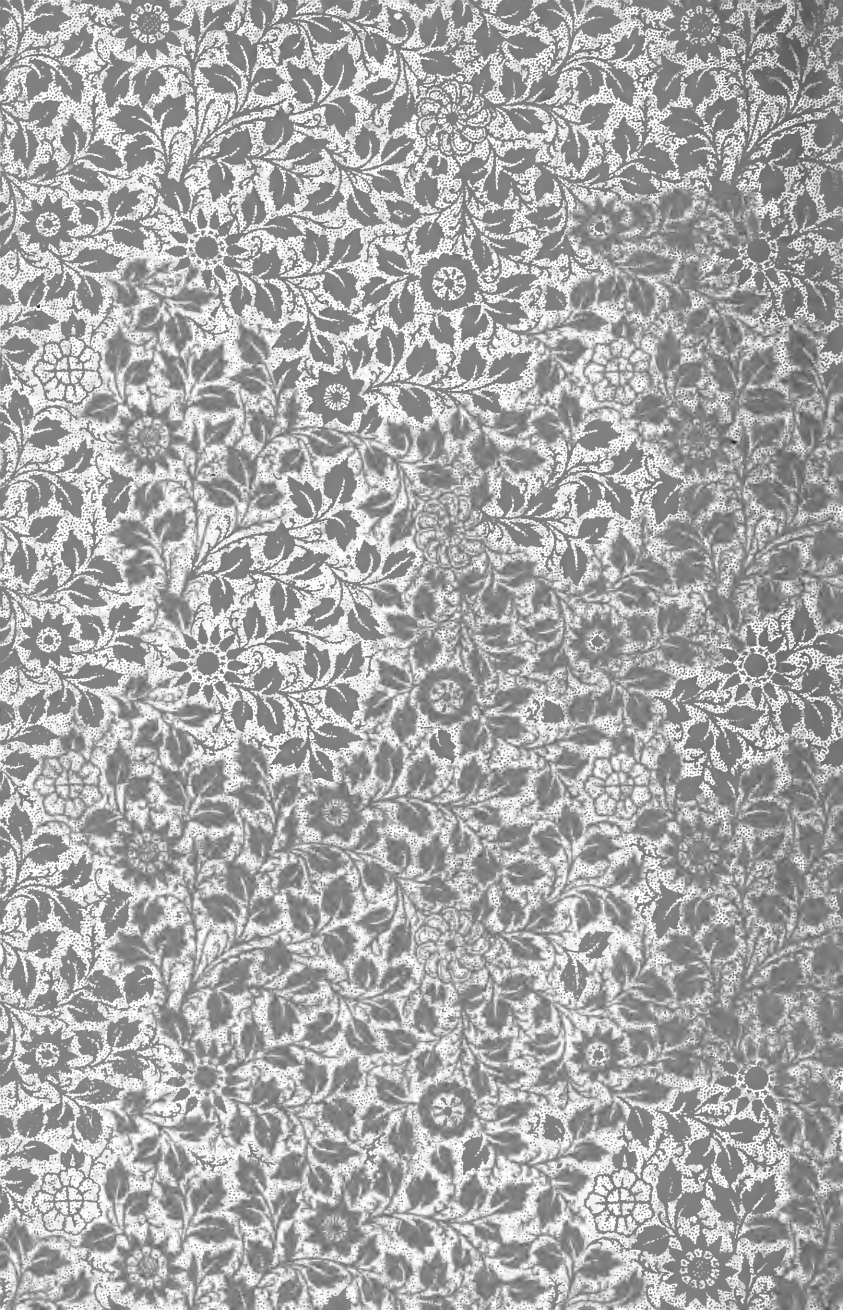
The wild bird sings,
And, singing, flies
A season brief,
And then it dies.

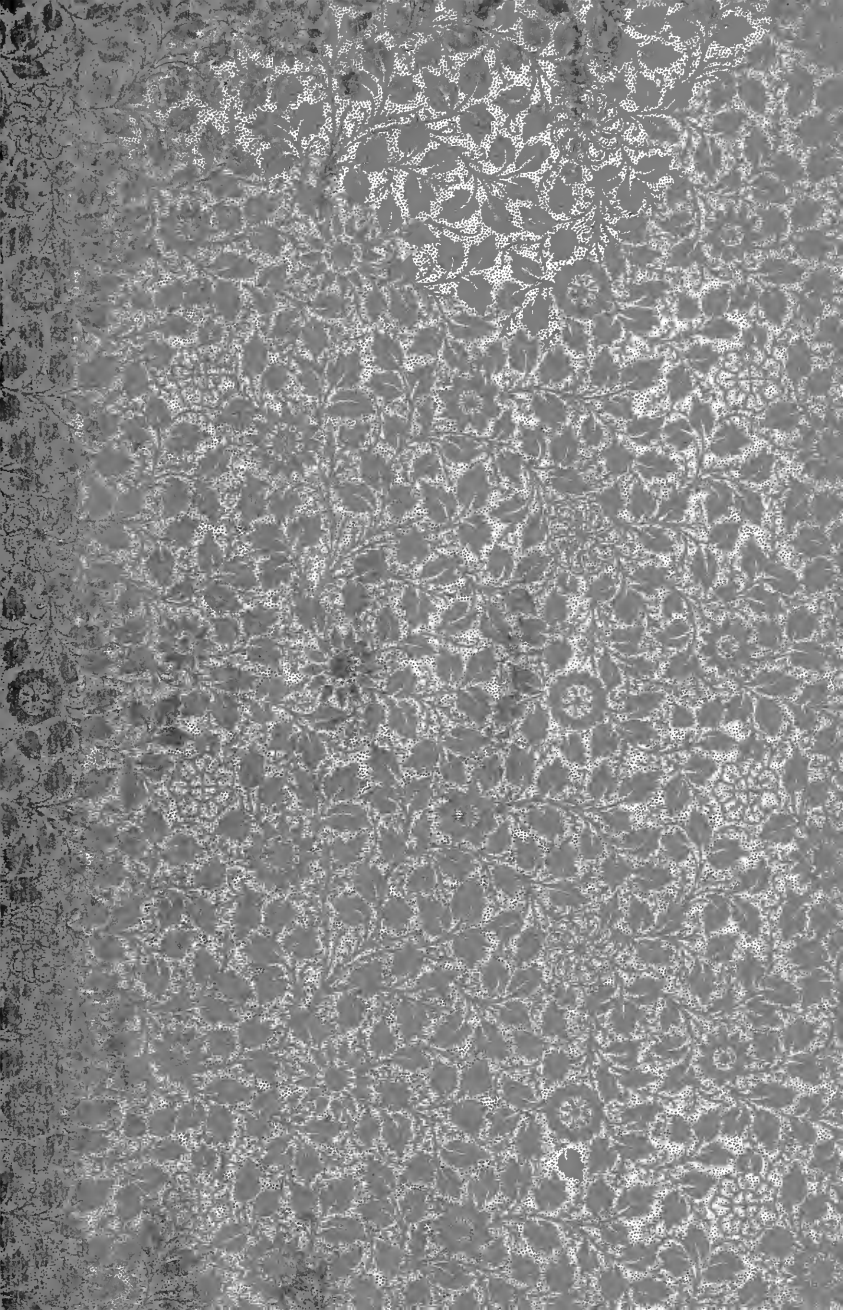
And mortals, made
Of common dust,

At last will die,
As all things must.

The sum of all
To this doth tend:
All things begin
And all must end.







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